

## OUR RELIGIOUS COLUMN.

## PRAYER ON THE MOUNTAIN.

BY REV. H. S. POWERS, D. D.

It is said that Jesus went up into a mountain apart to pray. If occasional seclusion was good for the Master, it is good for his disciples. For his spiritual interests man needs to go apart now and then to consider the true meanings of life, and the state and bearings of his own soul. Separate for a season from the din and struggle of the world, he can best discover how far he depends for his chief good upon what is material and unsubstantial, and how far the things of sense are controlling his inner life. As from the solitude of his contemplation he sees pleasure disordered of its enchantments, the illusions that bewilder and lead astray, the toils that are begotten in lust and vanity, how the lustre dies from the splendors of wealth and place, and much that once looked so alluring in the eyes of sense grows hollow and ghastly in the awful radiance of eternity. Here, in sight of reality, he can take a juster estimate of his own character and resources, and the necessities of his immortal being.

But he must go apart to pray. To keep the childlike and confiding spirit of the true disciple, he must engage in special acts of devotion where no eye but that of the Divine One looks upon his retirement. Fatigued by the worries and anxieties of his earthly lot, he needs peculiar refreshment. Discouraged by manifold sights of falseness and viciousness, he requires the inspiration that comes from contact with perfect purity. Exposed to malign assaults where his infirmity is greatest, and suffering afflictions that cut out the very sunshine of his delight, he needs the grace of an infinite sympathy and reinforcement to his deepest and most secret life. And so, praying in a spirit that renounces all falseness and impurity, clinging to the ineffable and all-sustaining love, resting heart and life and all its interests on the perfect friend who does not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, he is lifted out of his lower self, translated to higher moods and richer apprehensions of being, brought into blessed communion with the infinite heart, and appropriates the life divine.

## SUMMARY OF CHURCH NEWS.

## EPISCOPAL.

—Speaking of the consecration of Bishop Pierce, the *Standard of the Cross* says:—"It was a 'singing service' from beginning to end, all under the direction of the Bishop of Florida as chief chorister, and seems to have given as much delight to the musical tastes of the good people of Mobile as a first-class opera."

—The consecration in Mobile of Dr. Pierce as Bishop of Arkansas seems to have been the most advanced performance of the sort yet attempted. It was a singing service from beginning to end. Creed and prayers were all sung or intoned, and the red and pink doctors' hoods were worn as well as the more ecclesiastical millinery.

—At the convocation of Bishops, held by order of the Archbishop of Canterbury, February 11, it was unanimously resolved to appoint a committee of eminent and erudite scholars and divines, whose duty it shall be to report at a future meeting on the advisability of a revision of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Several of the Bishops presented citations of the present versions, which were pronounced either incorrect renderings of the original texts, or of doubtful authority and origin. Archdeacon Williams informed the convention that Dr. Temple had authorized him to announce that his essays will not hereafter appear in the future editions of the "Essays and Reviews." Subsequently, at the suggestion of his friend, Dr. Temple said his essays would be published in the future editions of "Essays and Reviews," but as "matters written by Frederick Temple, and not as written by the Bishop of Exeter."

## METHODIST.

—The vote of the latter (German district not included) of the Texas Conference, for lay delegation, is 1438 against 1.

—The Methodist church membership in this State numbers one hundred and twenty-eight thousand, with a ministry of seven hundred and thirty.

—Several independent Methodist churches in Baltimore and vicinity have formed a Fraternal Congregational Association. It is thought that Dr. Deems' Church of the Strangers, New York, will join them.

—British Methodism has contributed \$26,000,000 for foreign evangelization; and the Wesleyan Society has more communicants in its mission churches than all other British missionary societies combined.

—The new Methodist church in Jackson, Mich., was dedicated on Sabbath, February 6. Bishop Simpson preached an excellent sermon, after which a collection, to cancel the church indebtedness, was taken up, and \$30,000 were raised! The debt was about \$28,000.

—The Rev. J. A. Williams, of the Bethany Independent Methodist Episcopal Church, has lately preached a sermon on "Our Church Growth and Prospects." In an appendix thereto we read that the two independent churches in Baltimore, with the one in Cumberland, will form a Fraternal Congregational Association.

—Public opinion is evidently with the minority report in the matter of the alleged frauds in the Methodist Book Concern. This is partly because that report was the only one to mention the facts on which it was based, and partly because the majority report, which exculpated everybody from blame, was such a contradiction of their former report. The first report was unanimous, and asserted "great mismanagement and serious losses." The second report of the majority finds nothing "fraudulent or corrupt," and says that the testimony "failed to establish the allegation of losses." The *Methodist* says that it was only by sharp practice that the minority report enabled to publish their report at all, as the attempt was made to suppress it. But Dr. Slicer took it from the table and refused to give it up. An attempt was made to remove Dr. Lanahan, but was unsuccessful. The *Methodist* says that the reason why its editor refused to appear before the committee was because their object was to find out whether Dr. Lanahan had given him the information on which he based his editorial attacks on the management of the Book Concern.

## PRESBYTERIAN.

—The Board of Missions, at a recent meeting, appointed the Rev. E. P. Livingston, of Bushnell, Illinois, Superintendent of Western Missions.

—Since the 19th of December, 1868, eighty-two persons have been received into the First Presbyterian Church, Galveston, Texas, fifty on examination, and thirty-two by certificate.

—Communion was held in the Second United Presbyterian Church, Allegheny, Pa., Rev. J. B. Clark, D. D., pastor, on the second Sabbath of February. Thirty members were added to the roll, fourteen of whom were from classes in the Sabbath-school.

—The will of the late John M. Hill, Esq., of Nashville, Tenn., bequeaths \$30,000 of his large estate to the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville. It is intended to be a perpetual endowment fund. The interest on \$10,000 is to go toward educating ministers of that congregation, and on the other \$10,000 towards the support of the poor of the church.

—On a late Sabbath forty-seven new members were added to the Fourth United Presbyterian Church, (Rev. W. C. Jackson, pastor), Lombard street, above Nineteenth. The congregation have just commenced the erection of a new church edifice at Nineteenth and Fifth-water streets. It will have a front of sixty feet and a depth of one hundred and two feet.

—A new Reformed Presbyterian congregation is about to be organized in the upper part of the city of New York, to be called the "Fourth Reformed Church." It is an offshoot of the Third Church, in Twenty-third street, recently under Rev. Dr. Sloane, and now has about one hundred regular members, while the attendance at the services, especially on Sunday evenings, has been quite large. Rev. J. Johnson, of Washington, has been engaged to supply the pulpit.

—From the New York *Evangelist* we learn that the average work of the New York Port Society for each week is as follows:—Number of meetings, 37; attendance of women alone, 1000; visits to vessels and boarding houses, 1050; number of seamen signing the pledge, 30; packages of tracts distributed, 4000; volumes of books, 150; Bibles and Testaments, 75; packages of reading matter to crews, 20. Six missionaries and three ordained ministers are in constant service, and the Gospel is regularly preached at their church, and two flourishing missions; and these means have been so blessed that dance-houses in the neighborhood have been closed, some of the vilest localities made safe at night, while scarcely a week has passed without instances of conversions.

—The Presbyterian Church of Ireland held its General Assembly the last week in January. The great work was the adapting of itself to the new relations with the Government. As the *Regium Donum* is now withdrawn, each minister was decided by the Assembly, as to communion with Government, so as to form a fund called the Communion Fund. To this will be added the sustentation fund, which is to be raised by each church contributing at the rate of a penny a week for each of its members. The two funds will secure each pastor a salary of £100. Any church which wishes to add more for its own minister can do so. The *Nonconformist* calls the Irish Church the stingiest ecclesiastical body in Christendom, and evidently thinks the present plan not the best to cultivate liberality.

## CONGREGATIONAL.

—The Rev. Leonard W. Bacon has tendered his resignation as pastor of the New England Church in Williamsburg, and the resignation has been accepted.

—The Congregational Churches in Missouri now number nearly sixty. About eight of them are self-sustaining, while the others are fostered by the Home Missionary Society. Last autumn special means were taken to strengthen these churches, by the employment or encouragement of evangelists.

—The Rev. J. C. Smith and Hobart, respectively the agents of the American Missionary Association and of the Home Missionary Association, were present, a short time since, at a prayer meeting of the church in Washington, on the return from the South. Both agreed that the prospects of Southern Congregationalism were far from flattering. The church at Memphis is almost ruined by intestine divisions; that of New Orleans is hardly self-supporting. No church south of the Potomac is stronger than the little church of Fairfax, Virginia, and that has about thirty members, and a pastor supported by the Home Missionary Society. Most of those who migrate southward do it for the sake of making money; and to make money there, it is generally necessary to divest oneself of every Northern element.

## BAPTIST.

—The Lee Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, New York, is to be deprived of the further pastoral care of the Rev. J. Hyatt Smith, who intends to branch out on the "Open Communion" basis, with a fair prospect of success.

—The pastor of the Spruce Street Baptist Church, Dr. Smith, has gone to Florida to recruit his shattered health. Dr. Weston, of the Crozer Institute, supplies his pulpit.

—The Baptist churches in the consolidated city of Philadelphia now number forty-two. About one-half of them have been refreshed, more or less, of late, with revival influences, and report additions by baptisms.

—Old "landmarkism" among the Southern Baptists is Baptist doctrine of the strictest sort. In its literature, a South Carolina Baptist Union has just voted that, in the discussion on the subject between Elders Graves, of the Baptist, and Jeter, of the *Religious Herald*, "we agree with the latter to repudiate all Campbellite and Federalist influences, and to declare the latter invalid," and that this point "is vital to the Baptist denomination."

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